

parent, and changed to most of our senses; when the same kind of nourishment taken in by animals is turned into blood, milk, flesh, bones, nerves, and all the other similar parts; when that which was in the form of bright flame, appears in the form of dark smoke; and that which was in the form of vapour, in the form of rain or water, or the like; I say, that in all these mutations of bodies, there must needs be something made out of nothing. But that in all the Protean transformations of nature,⁹ which happen continually, there should be real entities thus perpetually produced out of nothing and reduced to nothing, seemed to be so great a paradox to the ancients, that they could by no means admit of it. Because, as we have already declared, first they concluded it clearly impossible by reason, that any real entity should of itself rise out of nothing ; and secondly, they thought it very absurd to bring God upon the stage, with his miraculous extraordinary power, perpetually at every turn ; as also, that every thing might be made out of every thing, and there would be no cause in nature for the production of one thing rather than another, and at this time rather than that, if they were miraculously made out of nothing. Wherefore they sagaciously apprehended, that there must needs be some other mystery or intrigue of nature in this business, than was commonly dreamed of, or suspected; which they concluded to be this, that in all these transformations there were no such real entities of forms and qualities distinct from the matter, and the various disposition of its parts, - in respect of figure, site, and motion (as is vulgarly supposed) produced and destroyed; but that all these feats